

# David Schirm

## From then until Now

September 6 - November 1, 2008

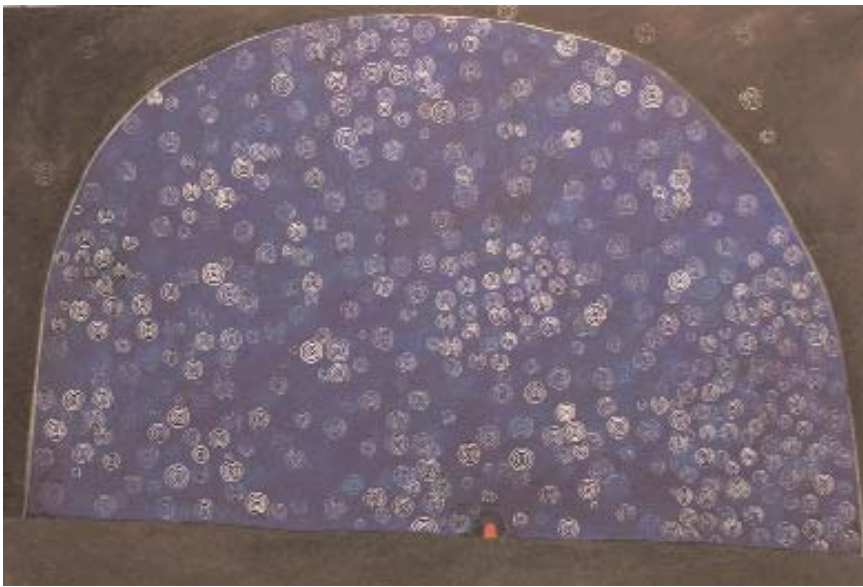


*End of Days*, 2008. Oil on canvas.

David Schirm, through images that are both beautiful and unnerving, addresses some of the most elemental concerns of humanity, such as existence, survival and ultimately continuation. He does this by subverting the traditional landscape - a genre of painting that represents natural scenery - into abstracted plains of intensely emotive color and cyclic forms that are in themselves pow-

erfully affecting. These otherworldly images show iceberg like forms afloat in a sea of saturated red and black shapes, as in *End of Days*. Or, as in *Blood of the Water*, blood overtakes the ground and spurts up as if it were newly sprung vegetation, creating a sparse forest of fountain like trees. Through this powerful and provocative imagery, Schirm's work runs the gamut from bleak and desultory, alluding to the end of existence, to hopeful and celebratory, by suggesting birth and rejuvenation.

Schirm draws from a number of varied stylistic and cultural sources to achieve this complex aesthetic. These sources include Western religious themes, the ideas associated with miniatures from West and South Asia, Hindu philosophy, and contemporary political issues such as war and environmental devastation. Although his works draw from various cultures both past and present, the



*Dome of the Poet*, 2008. Oil on canvas.

results seem purposefully unspecific in their time and place. Therefore these fantastic scenes are not only compositionally compelling, but are also windows through which life can be interpreted and understood and the problems of modern society reflected upon. For example, Schirm's more desultory images are potentially a reflection of the environmental devastation that is occurring and the grave outcome if the trend of mistreating the environment is not reversed. Schirm's scenes are as much about prophesizing what could be and reflecting upon what was, as they are about the ramifications of simple yet profound choice.

-Brooke Fitzpatrick



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